

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 PM-05 INR-07 CIAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5713

AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY

USMISSION BERLIN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY OSLO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 COPENHAGEN 0262

E.O.: 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, XT, UR, DA

SUBJ: BREZHNEV LETTER TO EUROPEAN LEADERS

REFS: (A) COPENHAGEN 23, (B) STATE 8297

1. MFA NATO DIRECTOR FROST GAVE US COPY OF BREZHNEV LETTER
AS PROMISED REF A. WE NOTE THAT IN ADDITION TO TEN COUNTRIES
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MENTIONED AS RECIPIENTS, FRG ALSO RECEIVED LETTER SUBSTANCE
OF WHICH REPORTED REF B. FROST SAID COPY OF THEIR LETTER
TRANSMITTED TO DANISH MISSION AT NATO. LETTER DID NOT COME
UP IN EC POL DIRECTORS' MEETING, JANUARY 10-11.

2. FROST ADDED THAT WHEN SOVIET AMBASSADOR HANDED LETTER T
PRIMIN JORGENSEN, LATTER POINTED OUT THAT DENMARK HAS NO NUCLEAR

WEAPONS AND WONDERED IF THIS WERE ALSO TRUE OF ALL WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES. FROST CONTINUED THAT WHEN FINMIN HEINESSEN TRANSMITTED MOSCOW LAST WEEK EN ROUTE TO TOKYO, SOVIETS WERE UNINTERESTED IN FINANCES BUT MADE SAME OBJECTIONS TO NEUTRON BOMB.

3. AT RISK OF REPETITION, WE ARE REPEATING TEXT OF BREZHNEV LETTER TO DANES, (TRANSLATION MADE FROM RUSSIAN TO DANISH AND THENCE TO ENGLISH.)

BEGIN TEXT:

HONORABLE PRIME MINISTER:

I FIND IT NECESSARY TO CALL ON YOU REGARDING A QUESTION WHICH IS EXTREMELY SERIOUS IN THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION -- THE QUESTION OF THE NEUTRON BOMB. IT HAS BEEN THE CAUSE OF CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION, NOT ONLY IN GOVERNMENTS, PARLIAMENTS, AND MILITARY CIRCLES, BUT ALSO ON THE PART OF THE PEOPLE, THE PARTIES, AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS. THIS QUESTION CALLS FOR COMPLETE FRANKNESS.

OUR POSITION CONCERNING THE PLANS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEUTRON WEAPON AND ITS DEPLOYMENT IN WESTERN EUROPE IS WELL KNOWN TO YOU. IT IS EXTREMELY NEGATIVE. THE CRUX OF THE MATTER IS THAT A NEW DIRECTION FOR THE NUCLEAR ARMS RACE IS DEVELOPING WITH RESULTING DANGEROUS CONSEQUENCES, STRIKING A HARD CONFIDENTIAL

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BLOW AGAINST HUMAN DESIRES TO REMOVE THE THREAT OF NUCLEAR WAR. IN THIS SITUATION WHERE THE VITAL INTERESTS OF PEOPLES AND COUNTRIES ARE AT STAKE, I CALL UPON YOU AND THE LEADERS OF A NUMBER OF OTHER COUNTRIES IN PARTICIPATING IN JOINT EUROPEAN CONFERENCES.

IT CAN BE A SECRET FROM NO ONE THAT THE US REPRESENTATIVES TO THE NATO MEETING IN DECEMBER PRESSED WITH GREAT PERSISTENCE THEIR ATTEMPTS TO OBTAIN AGREEMENT FROM THEIR EUROPEAN ALLIES FOR THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE NEUTRON WEAPON ON THEIR TERRITORIES. THERE IS, THEREFORE, REASON TO BE ON THE ALERT BECAUSE OF THE REACTION IN RESPONSIBLE WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES TO ALL THIS. WHILE THERE STILL IS SOME DOUBT AND HESITATION AT THE POLITICAL LEVEL, MILITARY LEADERS ARE ALREADY DISCUSSING PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE NEUTRON BOMB IN WESTERN EUROPE AND ITS POSSIBLE USE. THE DANGER ENSUING FROM THIS CANNOT BE UNDERRATED.

I SAY IT DIRECTLY: WE SEE SUCH ATTEMPTS ONLY AS EFFORTS TO MISLEAD THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD WHO ARE INCREASINGLY CONCERNED AND WHO RAISE THEIR VOICES HIGHER AND HIGHER IN PROTEST AGAINST THE NEUTRON BOMB. IS IT POSSIBLE, REALISTICALLY SPEAKING, TO BELIEVE THAT THE NEUTRON WEAPON, IF INTRODUCED, WILL

BE USED ONLY IN LIMITED CIRCUMSTANCES, ONLY ON THE BATTLEFIELD
AND ONLY AGAINST SUCH AND SUCH FORCES? IF WE ARE TO THINK ALONG
MILITARY LINES, IT OUGHT TO BE CLEAR THAT IN CASE OF A CONFLICT
ONLY THE INHERENT LOGIC OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES WILL DETERMINE THE
ACTIONS OF ONE OR THE OTHER PARTY.

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HOWEVER, BY ITS VERY NATURE, WITH ITS DESTRUCTIVE POWERS,
THE NEUTRON BOMB CAN STRIKE NOT ONLY PEOPLE IN MILITARY UNI-
FORM, BUT ALSO LARGE MASSES OF THE CIVILIAN POPULATION. IT IS
AN INHUMAN MASS-DESTRUCTION WEAPON, AND IT IS AIMED AT THE
PEOPLE. ITS DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT REDUCE THE POSSIBILITY OF A
NUCLEAR CONFLICT; IT WILL INCREASE IT. THE REALITY IS THAT IF
THE NEUTRON WEAPON IS EVER USED, DEATH WILL SWEEP OVER ENTIRE
COUNTRIES AND PROBABLY LEAVE NO PLACE ON EARTH UNTOUCHED.

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MOREOVER, WHILE TODAY THE NEUTRON BOMB COULD BE LAUNCHED BY CERTAIN TYPES OF VEHICLES, IT WILL TOMORROW, OR THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW, BE DELIVERED BY OTHER VEHICLES OF GREATER RANGE. TODAY, THIS WEAPON POSSESSES ONE POWER, TOMORROW IT WILL BE TWENTY OR ONE HUNDRED TIMES GREATER. THE ARMS RACE CARRIES ITS OWN MOMENTUM THAT APPEARS THE MINUTE ONE PARTY CONTEMPLATES STARTING A NEW ROUND OF WEAPONS.

THE PLANS FOR THE NEUTRON BOMB ALREADY HAVE HAD A BAD INFLUENCE ON THE POLITICAL CLIMATE IN THE WORLD AND, IF CARRIED OUT, THEY WILL ENTAIL EVEN LARGER COSTS. HOW WILL THE TALKS APPEAR THAT ARE GOING ON NOW REGARDING A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE LIMITATION OF THE ARMS RACE, IF THE INTRODUCTION OF THE NEUTRON WEAPON IS TO TAKE PLACE AT THE SAME TIME? THERE WOULD BE LITTLE FAITH LEFT BY THE PEOPLE IN A SOLUTION TO THE DISARMAMENT PROBLEM OR LITTLE HOPE THAT A POSITIVE RESULT TO THE TALKS COULD BE ACHIEVED. ALSO THE NEGOTIATIONS THEMSELVES WOULD IN A NUMBER OF INSTANCES BE THREATENED.

WHAT MUTUAL CONFIDENCE CAN THERE BE OR WHAT KIND OF COOPERATION CAN EXIST BETWEEN EAST AND WEST IN SOLVING THE GREAT TASK OF FREEING THE PEOPLE FROM ATOMIC DANGER IF ONE PARTY BANKS ON A NEW SOPHISTICATED WEAPON AIMED AT -- AND THIS IS NO SECRET -- THE SOVIET UNION AND OTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES? WHAT WOULD THE WHOLE DETENTE POLICY BE WORTH, IF PLANS FOR THE NEUTRON BOMB WERE NEVERTHELESS CARRIED OUT? IT WOULD MEAN THE DESTRUCTION OF MANY OF THE BENEFITS TO SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE THAT SO LABORIOUSLY HAVE BEEN WORKED OUT DURING THE LAST FEW YEARS, THROUGH A JOINT EFFORT BY ALL THE PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES IN EUROPEAN CONFERENCES.

WHETHER THE PRODUCTION OF THE NEUTRON BOMB WILL BE STARTED
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AND, IF SO WHETHER IT WILL BE DEPLOYED IN EUROPE, IS A DECISION THAT, OF COURSE, PRINCIPALLY DEPENDS ON THE USA. IT IS CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT TO A LARGER DEGREE, THE DECISION WILL BE DETERMINED BY THE VIEWS OF ALL MEMBERS OF NATO, AND HERE WE ARE TALKING ABOUT A DECISION THE MAGNITUDE OF WHICH CAN TRIGGER A CHAIN OF EVENTS THAT WILL ULTIMATELY LEAD TO THE RISK THAT WHOLE COUNTRIES WILL BE DEPOPULATED AND THAT MILLIONS AND MILLIONS OF PEOPLE WILL DIE. THE RESPONSIBILITY HERE IS EXCEEDINGLY GREAT. BECAUSE IF THE CHOICE IS IN FAVOR OF THE NEUTRON BOMB, THE

SOVIET UNION WILL BE FACED WITH THE NECESSITY OF HAVING TO
RESPOND TO THE CHALLENGE, WHICH MEANS WE WILL BE FORCED TO
REACT AS WE REACTED AT THE TIME THE ATOM BOMB APPEARED. I AM
COMPELLED TO STATE THIS ONCE AGAIN WITH THE GREATEST FIRMNESS.
THE SECURITY OF OUR PEOPLE AND OF OUR ALLIES CANNOT BE JEOPARDIZED.

IT IS NOT TOO LATE TO STOP; THERE IS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE
DANGEROUS ACCELERATION OF THE ARMS RACE, AND WE FORWARD SUCH AN
ALTERNATIVE. YOU ARE AWARE,
I ASSUME, THAT IN MY SPEECH AT THE
END OF THE YEAR I SUGGESTED THERE BE A MUTUAL AGREEMENT NOT TO
PRODUCE THE NEUTRON BOMB. THAT PROPOSAL, OFFERED TO THE WESTERN
POWERS, I HEREBY CONFIRM. WE ARE PREPARED TO ENTER INTO AN
AGREEMENT ABOUT THIS AT ANY TIME.

I HOPE YOU WILL GIVE THE THOUGHTS HERE DESCRIBED YOUR FULL
ATTENTION AND THAT, BEFORE IRRETRIEVABLE STEPS ARE TAKEN, WE WILL
BE ABLE TO REACH A MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING REGARDING THE REJECTION
OF THE NEUTRON BOMB. YOURS TRULY, L. BREZHNEV, JANUARY 5, 1978
END TEXT. DEAN

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Message Attributes

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